

**APPROVED APRIL 25, 2023**

Montgomery County Community Action Board  
Zoom Meeting  
March 28, 2023

## **MINUTES**

**\*Pre-Meeting Discussion:** Prior to the start of the full board meeting, the board members had a special discussion with Ludeen McCartney-Green, a Legislative Attorney with the County Council, regarding the two rent stabilization bills before the County Council. Ms. McCartney-Green shared information about both bills and answered board members' questions.

**CAB Members in Attendance:** Elaine Carballo, Valerie Chatfield-Smith, Lisa Conlon, Erika Conner, Denise Fredericks, Jeffery Johnson, Will Kenlaw, Evelyn Okutu, Lisette Orellana Engel, Myriam Paul, Claudia Simmons, and Mike Subin

**CAB Members Absent:** Danette Lawrence, Pamela Lockett, Timothy Robinson, and Zelda Wafer-Jones

**CAA Staff:** Sharon Strauss, Charlene Muhammad, and Leah Goldfine

**Guests:** Betty Smith, Commission on Aging, and Lavontte Chatmon, Executive Director of Nonprofit Montgomery

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:12 pm.

### **Consent Agenda**

Denise moved to approve the consent agenda. Mike seconded the motion and all voted in favor. The consent agenda included the minutes from the February 28, 2023 CAB meeting; meeting evaluations summary from the February 28, 2023 meeting; Executive Director's Report; Budget Report; TESS and Navigators Report; VITA Report; Head Start Report; HS Transportation Waiver; HS Grant Application; Contracts Report; Staff Liaison's Report; County Council Bill 15-23; County Council Bill 16-23; Summary of County Council Rent Stabilization Bills; CSBG Annual Report Highlights; Commission on Health Advocacy Letter; Community Needs Assessment Final Draft; and CAB Testimony: SB26 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children's Health Program, and Social Services Programs - Eligibility and Enrollment; SB552 - Family Prosperity Act of 2023; SB562 - Maryland Small Food Banks Grant Program – Establishment; HB1050 - Access to Counsel in Evictions – Funding; HB988 - Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Modifications; and SB970 - Fire Protection and Prevention – Sprinkler Systems and Smoke Alarms – Requirements (Melanie Diaz Sprinklers Save Lives Act).

### **CAB Updates**

The board continued its discussion about the rent stabilization bills, with staff noting that the board's Affordable Housing Committee had some concerns about unintended consequences. The Committee will wait to review additional analysis from the Council to determine next steps.

Board leaders provided an update on the individual meetings with Councilmembers. The board was in the process of meeting with all eleven Councilmembers, explaining the work of Community Action and highlighting the board's priorities for FY24.

Staff shared an update on the CAI. The program was wrapping up, with participants completing their advocacy projects.

The CAB established a Recruitment Committee to interview prospective board members and recommend new appointments to the County Executive. Lisette, Claudia, Denise, Mike, and Evelyn volunteered to serve on this committee.

The CAB also established a Nominating Committee to reach out to board members and develop the EC slate for FY24. Mike, Myriam, and Evelyn volunteered to serve on this committee.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Board members received a detailed written Executive Director's report with updates on the agency's programs and services. Sharon provided an update on the FY24 proposed budget and the CSBG Annual Report, which had been submitted.

Sharon reported that we are working with the team at the University of Washington to update the Self-Sufficiency Standard report for Montgomery County, which should be finalized this summer.

The Navigation Team continues to work with the victims of the Arrive Silver Spring fire. Sharon noted that we are hoping to have a resolution of the MOU with MCPS for Head Start soon. VITA was having a very successful season, having served over 1,500 households by that point. A visit from the IRS Commissioner was scheduled for that Thursday at the Wheaton VITA site.

### **Head Start**

Board members received a detailed written report with updates on the Head Start program. Charlene provided an overview of the FY24 grant, which the board members received with their meeting materials. Highlights this year included a 12% increase in Language and Literacy, a 14% increase in math, and increased parent engagement. Charlene noted that the majority of the Head Start budget will go to MCPS, with smaller portions going to School Health Services, the Community Action Agency, and Early Childhood Services. There was also a substantial increase in the Cost of Living Adjustment for staff. Charlene noted that most of the Quality Improvement funding Head Start received will go to School Health Services, allowing for two new nurses and one new dental hygienist. The consultant who has been working with Community Action to support the Head Start grant will continue next year. Denise moved to approve the Head Start grant application. Lisette seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Board members received the annual Head Start transportation waiver request with their meeting materials. Charlene explained that Head Start has certain safety requirements for transportation, such as safety harnesses, that MCPS cannot comply with because the County's program uses the same buses as the rest of the school system. The program therefore requests a waiver every year. Lisette moved to approve the transportation waiver request and Claudia seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**Contracts**

Board members received a detailed written report with updates on the agency's contract partners.

**Open Forum/Announcements**

Mike requested an update on the Linkages to Learning program at the next CAB meeting. Other board members expressed interest in learning more about the program.

**Adjournment:** The meeting ended at 7:06 pm.